THE WOMAN OF THE FUTURE—

What Will She be Like?

An Answer from THE BRITISH NOVELIST E. M. DELAFIELD

Miss E. M. Delafield, English novelist and editor, in prophesying on women of the future, avers that whether she will rule the world politically or not will depend on her numerical strength as compared to man's. Women will ultimately enjoy universal suffrage and are destined to control world politics if they greatly outnumber the male population of the future.

By LILLIAN G. GENN.

WOMAN has accomplished so much during recent years that if she continues to progress in the same ratio it will be dazzling to contemplate the changes she will effect a century hence. Many even believe that in numerous ways the woman of today already has changed the world. As for the role in life that she now plays, it would have been a fantastic dream to the woman of a few generations ago. What role, then, will she occupy in the future? And just where will the man come in—if at all? Will she rule the world politically? Will she apply herself to business and professional fields and relegate her domestic tasks to man?

These and other questions concerning the woman of the future were put to Miss E. M. Delafield, the distinguished English novelist. Although she disclaimed any special powers to prognosticate the future, she graciously consented to give this provocative question some thought. Despite her assertion, she is nevertheless quite well qualified to make this speculation as to the woman of the future.

First, because her novels show illuminating understanding and insight into the life of the human being and particular familiarity with the psychology of woman—very necessary attributes for any one who would attempt to tell what a woman will do! As editor of Time and Tide, an English publication, and as a magistrate in the County of Cullompton, Devon, she is fully aware of the various progressive and political currents of the day. Furthermore, since she was brought up in France and lived for several years in Italy and Belgium and has also visited many other countries, she has a comprehensive knowledge of what women are doing in different parts of the world. She is, therefore, more than ordinarily well equipped to prophesy the role woman will play in the future.

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MISS DELAFIELD is a dainty, slender woman with deep, thoughtful, blue eyes and a lovely English voice. She speaks slowly, as if accustomed to deliberating before expressing herself.

Contrary to the opinion of many students and observers of the times, this author does not think that the pendulum, in so far as woman is concerned, will ever swing back—that she will relapse into the butterfly existence of former generations.

THEY'LL BE STRONGER

"Woman will be stronger than before—more the Amazon type," she said. "She will be a leading figure in industry, in the professions and in politics. Whether she will ever rule the world politically will depend on whether she will be numerically superior to the men. England today, for instance, has many more women than men, and if their powers and privileges should increase, the country will in all actuality be ruled by women in the future.

"However, if the proportion of women is not greater, I have every reason to believe that the world will be ruled by men and women together. They will share alike the responsible positions of the country. And since there are some offices in which they are inherently better fitted than the men, we can look for better and more effective results.

"As for a woman Prime Minister or a woman President, while I think it will take more than a century for woman to win the confidence of the men, yet inevitably and undoubtedly she will hold such an office. When women begin to show themselves capable of holding executive positions and the obstacles of sentiment and prejudice have been overcome, it will not be so novel an idea to the populace to have a woman ruler. After all, there have been great woman rulers.

PUT VOTE TO USE.

"Since women have had the vote—and it is an incredibly short time when you really come to consider it—they have contributed noticeably to the welfare of humanity.

"As for spiritual growth, I can't agree with those who claim that women will add to it as they become more influential. To me that is merely sentimentalizing woman's influence, and it is exactly what the intelligent progressive woman does not want. If there is to be any spiritual development, man must contribute to it as much as woman."

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"SINCE woman will be taking a more active part in various affairs, will her interest in the home, or her desire to create a home, be less?" the interviewer questioned.

"I do not believe so," Miss Delafield replied. "While she will not consider marriage the alpha and omega of her life, she will, nevertheless, want it. But whereas today it is only the exceptional woman who can successfully combine motherhood and a career, the woman of the future will have her home life so well organized that she will be well able to devote part of her energy to outside work.

THE NEUTER SEX.

"Another thing that I imagine will happen is this: There will develop a new class of women—a sort of neuter sex, who will not be interested in marriage or reproduction at all. Why should it be taken for granted that all women were meant to be wives and mothers? That they should have a natural inclination for home life? Until now no other doors have been open to them, so they had to cultivate that interest regardless of whether they were fitted for such a role in life or not. But now that women have been freed from their shackles and all professions are open to them, now, too, that they have the fullest opportunity to develop themselves, there will be many who will turn wholly to intellectual pursuits. These women will become our great political leaders and will occupy important executive positions in the business world. They will also be the ones who will contribute to science, to progress and to thought.

"When once we rid ourselves of the idea that all women are meant for marriage and regard as unsuccessful the woman who does not marry, we will likewise gain another advantage. We will have a very much smaller number of ineffective wives and mothers. Those who are not fitted for that role in life will keep out of it and not feel forced to marry because of the opinion of society. We need not fear that this will in any way undermine the institution of marriage, for there will always be a large number of women who want to be wives and mothers and who will not be content unless their maternal desires are satisfied.

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"WHAT of the marriage institution itself?" the interviewer queried. "Will it be totally unlike traditional marriage?"

"If any change affecting the marriage institution does come about," she answered, "it will be the last to be wrought. Of course, many experiments will continue to be made with marriage and progress may dictate minor changes, but my opinion is that fundamentally it will exist unchanged. We must remember that, with the exception of Russia and America, the marriage relationship in other countries is just what it has always been. Divorces are still rare. This is due in a large measure to the laws which make it almost impossible to obtain a divorce. Therefore, if there is any change in the marriage institution, it will only affect the divorce laws. I think that the woman of the future will strive to obtain divorce laws that will not throw the burden of marriage on her as they do today. Perhaps mutual consent will be all that will be needed to dissolve the relationship. As for the monogamistic ideal, that will endure."

When mention was made that a famous statesman recently declared he believed woman would eventually relegate her domestic duties to man, Miss Delafield smilingly shrugged away this remark.

LESS INTEREST IN HOME.

"I can't say that the sex roles will ever be reversed. Woman is taking less interest in the home, but we must realize, too, that it is less necessary for her to do so. I believe, though, that there will be more equality in the home than exists today. Husband and wife will be equal partners in the business of running the home and bringing up the children. In other words, the woman of the future will receive more help from her husband in the home than she gets now.

"One distinct change that she will bring about is the single standard of chastity. Woman's new freedom thus far has gone to her head and her first impulse was to grab man's standard—to imitate his liberties and licenses. But when she has once passed through the experimental stage, being an intelligent and discerning person, she will come to the conclusion that she has nothing to gain from man's standard.

FIRMER MORAL CODES

"Since woman is more idealistic than man, she will not tolerate moral laxity very long and gradually she will establish the moral codes on a firmer, finer basis. As she will inculcate this ideal on her children, the man of the future will naturally come to accept this standard as his own. This should certainly be for the benefit and improvement of the race."

Miss Delafield was asked whether she thought that the woman of the future would be less of a slave to fashion than she is today.

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"I DO not," she laughed. "Woman in that respect will not change. Her willingness to obey that tyrannical master, Fashion, seems to be fundamentally rooted in her. I don't believe that woman will ever gainsay this particular master. But then we mustn't forget," twinkled the author, "that this master has an uncanny knowledge of women. Fashion may decree certain styles and while woman will submit, she will insist, though, that they be healthful, hygienic and sensible. She will never return to those ridiculous bustles and trailing skirts, nor will she ever again fetter her body with steel and whalebone.

"Because of the sensible clothes that woman has now adopted and her greater opportunities to engage in sports, her health has improved tremendously. This, plus the fact that science is constantly adding to our knowledge of how we can best live, will make woman a stronger, healthier individual than she has been before.

ACTIVE AT 100.

"Intellectually and physically, she will not stagnate so quickly. Whereas yesterday the woman of 30 considered her activities in life finished, today the woman of 50 and even 60 is active and as mentally alert as a young woman. No doubt the woman of the future will at the age of 100 have as much vigor and vitality as the middle-aged woman of today. And as woman becomes hardier and more fit, we will find her doing more and more of the physical tasks that are today only in the hands of the men."

There has been considerable speculation as to whether the dawn of a new era for women will see a larger number of them contributing to research and discovery. Whether, too, there will be more great women scientists, artists and philosophers.

"I do not believe," ventured Miss Delafield when this point was raised, "that suffrage and increased opportunities will have anything to do with it. There will always be more geniuses, inventors, scientists and the like among men than women. It seems to be a biological fact.

"Nevertheless, woman will accomplish much more for humanity. Perhaps her greatest contribution will be world peace. Then," she smilingly concluded, "who knows but she may at last be able to make this world a veritable paradise!"

SHE WILL BE—

PHYSICALLY—Woman will be stronger than before—more the Amazon type. In dress she will demand that fashions are healthful, hygienic and sensible.

POLITICALLY—Whether she will ever rule the world politically will depend on whether she will be numerically superior to the men.

SPIRITUALLY—If there is to be any spiritual development, man must contribute to it as much as woman.

DOMESTICALLY—Woman of the future will have her home life so well organized that she will be well able to have, in addition, her career or her outside work.

ROMANTICALLY — Marriage, fundamentally, will exist unchanged.

MORALLY—One distinct change that woman will bring about is the single standard of chastity.

THEY'LL DANCE IN SKY ABOARD NEW AIRSHIP

LONDON — The biggest lighter-than-air craft in the world, R101, is nearing completion at Cardington. Although 740 feet long and carrying 100 passengers and a crew of 50 she weighs less than 100 tons. A sea-going ship of the same size would weigh something like 30,000 tons, yet included in the giant airship are luxurious quarters for passengers and a lounge large enough to dance in.

It is expected that the airship will be finished by the end of this year.

If long trial flights are successful, it is intended that several more such giant airships will be built, and that a weekly service be inaugurated between England and Australia, and later between England and America.

A unique feature of R101 is that her main girders, instead of being built, as hitherto, of light-weight metal alloys, are constructed throughout of stainless steel. Everything in her design aims at imparting to the structure the utmost amount of strength compatible with the lightness which is so essential. Although weighing less than 100 tons, the designers are confident the R101 will have sufficient strength to ride out safely the biggest storm.

Right inside the hull, with wide outlook windows providing a magnificent panorama of land, sea and air, will be the passengers' quarters. As many as 100 passengers are to find luxurious accommodation in this air liner, which will, in addition, carry a crew of about 50 men. A finely-equipped lounge will be big enough to dance in, and is to be furnished luxuriously with big settees and other equipment.

But everywhere the question of lightness has to be considered.

Those big settees, solid looking though they will be, are to be constructed of featherweight metal; even the cushions will be filled with a special form of substance to save a few ounces of weight.

It is claimed that the engineers have practically solved the fire risk which has been so much dreaded in the operation of previous airships. The R101 is to be driven by engines of a new type, using a new form of crude-oil fuel that, it is claimed, is non-inflammable.

Five big crude oil engines, each developing 650 h. p., will drive the great machine, at a cruising speed of more than 80 miles an hour.